



# ***News Release***

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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### **Middletown Resident Selected as U.S. Small Business Administration 2006 Financial Services Champion of the Year**

**Middletown** -- The U.S. Small Business Administration has selected **Mark S. Cousineau**, Executive Director, Connecticut Community Investment Corporation (CTCIC), New Haven, CT as the Financial Services Champion of the Year for 2006. Some of the criteria evaluated for this prestigious award are the encouragement of the flow of investment capital to small businesses, and advocacy for changes in the financial services industry.

For many years, Mark has been a loyal supporter of small businesses. As a practicing attorney, Mark began serving as outside counsel to CTCIC while in private practice with a New Haven law firm. He later joined CTCIC as Deputy Director and Counsel until his appointment as Executive Director in late 1999. As Executive Director, Mark has been able to affect a significant increase in every financing program offered, especially the SBA's 504-loan program. In 2004 under Mark's leadership, CTCIC increased their SBA 504 loan volume from 24 loans and \$14.5 million in new lending to 62 loans and \$33.5 million during fiscal year 2005. In addition, for the past three years CTCIC has closed over \$2.1 million loans under the SBA's Micro-loan program. Mark's work to increase the availability of capital to small business has been a key component in the increase of small business lending throughout the state and his advocacy of smaller loans to the community has been overwhelming.

Mark also served two consecutive terms as president (2003 & 2004) of the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) a non-profit organization committed to the practice of economic development within the State of Connecticut. CEDAS has grown to 189 members, enjoys an excellent financial status, and has awarded \$3,000 in scholarship during Mark's tenure. A key highlight during his term as president was the impact he was able to make as an advocate on behalf of public policy at the Connecticut Legislature, a task unrelated to his duties at CTCIC. Accustomed to working outside of his regular duties Mark was instrumental in correcting the R & D tax credit, and supporter for urban site development and the attention to economic development efforts in small towns.

A resident of Middletown, Mark Cousineau has been a true champion for the small businessperson and therefore has earned the distinction of Financial Services Champion of the Year for 2006.

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*An award celebration for the SBA 2006 award recipients will be held Thursday June 15, 2006 at 4:00p.m. at The Belvedere, New Haven CT, for more information contact Greta Johansson at (860) or 240-4672 Hugh Curley at (860) 240-4650.*

*For information on SBA programs and services visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) or call (860) 2404700*